

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

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SUB: SOLAR ENERGY R&D IN IRAN

REFS: (A) TEHRAN 0757, (B) TEHRAN 4973

1. SCIATT CALLED 5 JULY 1976 ON DR. S. VOJDANI, DIRECTOR OF THE MATERIALS AND ENERGY RESEARCH CENTER (MERC), DESCRIBED IN REFTEL A AS THE IRANIAN LEAD AGENCY IN SOLAR ENERGY R&D, FOR AN UPDATE ON THEIR PROGRAM. WHEREAS LAST YEAR MERC'S BUDGET WAS APPROXIMATELY ONE MILLION DOLLARS, THIS YEAR IT IS TWO MILLION. THEY WILL SHORTLY EXPAND INTO A NEW BUILDING ACROSS THE STREET.

2. SEVERAL OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE OFFERED COOPERATION IN SOLAR ENERGY R&D. DR. VOJDANI REPORTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR'S LETTER TO COURT MINISTER ALAM PROPOSING COOPERATION IN THIS

FIELD (REFTEL B) HAD BEEN REFERRED TO HIM FOR PREPARATION OF A REPLY AND THAT HE HAD IN ESSENCE SUGGESTED THAT AN APPROPRIATE WAY TO INITIATE RELATIONS IN THIS FIELD WOULD BE TO HAVE AN IRANIAN TEAM VISIT ERDA'S SOLAR ENERGY R&D CENTER
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(PERHAPS LATER THIS SUMMER) TO LEARN WHAT WE ARE DOING AND

TO AGREE WITH US ON POTENTIALLY FRUITFUL AREAS FOR JOINT PROJECTS. THEN IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO DEFINE IN SOME DETAIL THE SCOPE AND TERMS OF COOPERATION, INCLUDING PATENT RIGHTS AND SHARING OF COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION AND PROCEEDS. (MERC IS INTERESTED IN FOREIGN PARTICIPATION IN R&D DONE WITHIN IRAN LEADING TO JOINT ENTERPRISES PRODUCING FOR A WORLD MARKET.) EMBASSY HAS NOW RECEIVED MFA NOTE OF 4 JULY WHICH CONFIRMS A VISIT OF AN IRANIAN TEAM TO U.S. AS THEIR DESIRED FIRST STEP. ACTION REQUESTED: ERDA PLEASE SUGGEST SCHEDULE FOR IRANIAN TEAM VISIT TO FEW SELECTED U.S. SOAR R&D CENTERS, PREFERABLY SOMETIME IN AUGUST. WE ASSUME GOI WILL PAY ALL THEIR OWN TRANSPORT AND PER DIEM.

3. MERC HAS ADVANCED FURTHEST IN ITS COOPERATION WITH FRANCE. DR. VOJDANI EXPECTS TO VISIT FRANCE NEXT WEEK TO FINALIZE AGREEMENTS WITH THE CNRS ON THREE TWO-YEAR PROJECTS: (1) DEVELOPMENT OF A 100 KW SOLAR POWER PLANT TO PROVIDE ELECTRICITY FOR A TYPICAL SMALL IRANIAN VILLAGE, (2) STUDY OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF INSOLATION THROUGHOUT IRAN AND ALTERNATIVES FOR ITS USE, AND (3) PREPARATION OF DESIGN FOR A TOTAL ENERGY SYSTEM FOR A VILLAGE, INCLUDING LAYOUT AND ARCHITECTURE. IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATE, AT LEAST, THE CNRS IS PAYING HALF THE COSTS. IT APPEARS THAT RENAULT MAY CONTINUE R&D ON HELIOSTATS JOINTLY WITH MERC IN IRAN. THE TECHNOLOGY AND PATENTS THAT MAY GROW OUT OF THIS COLLABORATION ARE TO BE JOINTLY OWNED, ACCORDING TO VOJDANI, AND EVENTUAL COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION WILL BE PREFERABLY IN FRANCO-IRANIAN FACTORIES LOCATED IN IRAN WITH FRENCH INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT. TEAMS ARE TO BE APPOINTED BY BOTH COUNTRIES FOR THESE PROJECTS OF A TIME SCHEDULED FOR VARIOUS STAGES OF THE WORK TO BE DRAWN UP.

4. VOJDANI SPECULATED THAT PROJECTS IN WHICH IRAN MIGHT LIKE TO COLLABORATE WITH U.S. COULD BE A STANDARD 10 MW SOLAR POWER PLANT CAPABLE OF SUPPLYING A TOWN OF 1,000-2,000 PEOPLE WITH ITS ELECTRICITY NEEDS OR POSSIBLY A 100 MW SOLAR POWER PLANT FOR A SMALL CITY.
HELMS

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